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BLESSEDNESS AND DUTY.

A

S E R M O N,

DELIVERED IN HOPEWELL,

N E W J E R S E Y,

ON THANKSGIVING DAY,

NOVEMBER 26, 1789.

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By OLIVER HART, A. M.

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These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!

Almighty!

MILTON.

Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing  
toward the children of men.

PSA. lxvi. 5.

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## S E R M O N, &c.

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NUM. chap. xxiii. ver. 23.

*Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, What hath GOD wrought!*

**E**VERY one that believes there is a GOD, who governs the world and superintends the concerns of men, must be sensible, we are laid under the greatest obligations to him, as that Almighty Being, in whose hands our breath is, and from whom all our blessings flow. There are times and seasons, however, which more immediately call us to the public exercises of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving. Such are our stated days of worship: and such is the present day; being set apart by our worthy rulers for that purpose.

Knowing your strong attachment to the Federal Government, and with what alacrity you always obey summonses of this nature, I shall the more chearfully contribute my small mite, to assist and lead you in the solemn services of the day; which through the agency of the Divine Spirit, I shall attempt, by availing myself of such assistance as may be derived from the words first read.

“ Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, What hath God wrought?”

Perhaps

Perhaps some may say, " We shall be finely entertained to-day, seeing our minister applies to a conjurer or soothsayer for help.

Permit me to reply, Whatever might have been Balaam's real character, he was sometimes (like Saul among the Prophets) under the influence and agency of the Spirit of God ; when in the sublimest language, he delivered the most important truths. He predicted the coming and kingdom of the Messiah. And in our text he speaks elegantly of the security and happiness of the Israelites, as being under the care and protection of the Almighty.

So far then from declining that assistance Balaam may afford me, I wish to apply his Prophecy, respecting the children of Israel, to the Citizens of America.

" *Surely*—it is a certain truth—a fact, which ought never  
 " to be contested :—*There is no enchantment against AME-*  
 " *RICA*—no charm or spell, which can despoil her of rea-  
 " son, or deprive her of the power of thinking and acting for  
 " herself in every emergency. *Neither is there any divination* \*  
 " *against* America's true and patriotic children, which can  
 " affect there future glory and felicity. No ; all prognos-  
 " tications of her falling into ruin and disgrace, being mere  
 " fiction. But, *according to this time*—the state of things,  
 " under the happy REVOLUTION, *it shall be said of Ameri-*  
 " *ca and her Sons, even all true Patriots, WHAT HATH*  
 " *GOD WROUGHT!* The several nations of the world,  
 " beholding the mighty Revolution, and the many great  
 " and wonderful events which have taken place, are struck  
 " with astonishment, and constrained to attribute the whole  
 " to a supernatural power, even the operations of Deity ;  
 " saying,

\* An early trial was made of the power of enchantment, or divination, against America, in a literal sense. About a year after the settling of Plymouth, the Indians collected all the Pawaws in the Country for three Days together, in a dark and dismal swamp, to curse and execrate the Christians, in a horrid and devilish manner, with their Conjurations.

*Prince's N. E. Chronology. page 99.*



“ saying, *What great, unexpected, and marvellous things  
hath God wrought for America?*”

This paraphrase of the text, naturally leads us to the peculiar business of the day ; which is, with grateful hearts, to notice some of the great and marvellous things which God hath wrought for us, as Americans. I say *some* ; for time and ability would fail to point out the *whole* : No man is equal to that task. Some therefore of the most interesting and perspicuous must suffice.

We shall begin with the *Discovery* of America. And in this the providence of God was visibly displayed. This vast continent was altogether unknown, to all the more civilized nations, for many centuries. They appear to have had no idea of such a country's existing, until God raised up CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, to make the discovery. He was a *Genoese* by birth—of a good family—well skilled in geography and navigation—of a curious mind—a bold and enterprising genius. And being possessed of a strong persuasion, that in order to ballance the terraqueous globe, and proportion the lands and seas to each other, there must needs be a Continent on the other side, which resolution combined with art would soon discover, he proposed the undertaking first to the *Genoese*, then to John, King of Portugal ; but meeting with no encouragement from either of them, he next applied to Ferdinand and Isabella, King and Queen of Spain ; and after five years waiting and urging, he prevailed on them to furnish him with three small ships and ninety men for this great enterprize ; with which he made a discovery of the NEW WORLD. In the year of Christ, fourteen hundred and ninety-two, he explored the West India Islands ; and in the year fourteen hundred and ninety-six, he discovered the CONTINENT. For which services, he met with a very inadequate reward. His own mariners mutinied and threatened his life. Once he was sent home, from one of the Islands, in chains

chains. And he has very unjustly been deprived of the merited honour of the Continent's bearing his name : In all reason, it ought to have been called COLUMBIA, and not *America*. However, by means of COLUMBUS, God discovered to the enlightened nations, this vast Continent ; said to contain a tract of country, upwards of eight thousand miles in length ; intended in Providence, no doubt, for a theatre of great and marvellous events. Some, of which, to the astonishment of the world, have already taken place. *What hath God wrought !*

From the *Discovery*, let us pass on to the *Settling* of America. And here we shall find that God *hath wrought* in this enterprize also. Upwards of a century rolled away, from the time America was discovered, until it was really settled. During which period, great revolutions took place in *Europe*, especially in a reformation from Popery. The minds of a number of the Clergy were illuminated by Divine Grace. These became burning and shining lights in the world ; and bore a noble testimony against the errors and superstitions of the church of Rome ; and notwithstanding they were greatly persecuted, they persevered with undaunted courage. The pure doctrines of the gospel were preached and imbibed, even at the hazard of life ; till at length the Protestant Religion mounted the throne, and received the sanction of human laws. Popery was quelled, and one would think persecution would have ceased. But such was the intolerance of the times, that when the reformers were freed from persecution, the reformed soon fell to persecuting one another. This, strange as it may seem, opened the door in Providence for settling the New World, A number of pious souls, in Great Britain, were persecuted for not conforming to the hierarchy of the church of England, as by law established. Some of them, that they might enjoy freedom in religion, first fled to Holland, and afterwards crossed the Atlantic, to the desert wilds of America ;



merica; \* determining to combat every difficulty, rather than wound their consciences or dishonor their God. And hardships in abundance they endured, from hunger, cold and the savage natives of the land.† Nevertheless, being a hardy, determined and pious people, who placed their confidence in God, they vigorously pressed forward, and compleated their design of settling America. Sundry attempts were made for the same purpose, prior to this, by men

\* Among those who fled to Holland was Mr JOHN ROBINSON, a Puritan Minister, in the north of England, of singular piety, great learning, and uncommon abilities. He, with his congregation, being grievously oppressed, fled to Amsterdam, anno 1607, and about a year after moved to Leyden; where, through much opposition, they formed their plan of settling America. Accordingly, in the year 1620, about one half of them embarked, via Old England, on that enterprize; leaving the other part, with their beloved Pastor, to follow when convenient. But to the great grief of them all, Mr. Robinson died at Leyden, in March 1625. However, most of the remaining part of this congregation joined their brethren, at different periods, in America. Never was a minister more highly, or more justly esteemed by his people, than Mr. Robinson was: Their descendants to the present day, speak of him, with great respect, as *the Father of New-England*.

† These religious people, in number 101, after combating a variety of obstructions, sailed from Plymouth, in Old England, September 6th, 1620; and having long endured the toils and hazards of the tumultuous ocean, on the 9th of November following, made Cape-Cod, an unknown coast, in a northern climate, at an inclement season. The hardships they endured at sea and on the coast, from rain, snow-storms, &c. before they could fix on a place to settle, and prepare any kind of shelter, brought on the scurvy and other disorders, which in about three months carried off one half of their number; most of them in the depth of winter, wanting comfortable houses and other necessaries of life. Sometimes two or three died in a day---the living scarce able to bury the dead---the well not sufficient to attend the sick. Their Governor, Mr. Carver, died in April, and his wife followed him in five or six weeks. Before they reaped their harvest, those who survived were, for a considerable time, allowanced to a quarter of a pound of bread per day.

N. B. On Lord's day, December 31st, 1620, these Christian people kept their first Sabbath on shore, in a place of their own building; and from this *Æra* is fixt the *settlement of America*.

men of the world, actuated wholly by selfish motives; but all their designs proved abortive. Our more successful adventurers, were stimulated by religion: They wished to find, not only a peaceable retreat for themselves, but a habitation for their God. And the Lord, in whom they trusted, carried them through all their difficulties, and made them the blessed instruments of settling this country. *According to this time it shall be said, What hath God wrought!*

America being thus settled, the rulers in the then Mother Country (so we were fond of stiling Great Britain), spread the wings of government over, under pretext of nourishing and cherishing, the young plantations. However just or unjust the claim of Britain's crown over America, or by whatever motives those rulers were actuated, they professedly acknowledged us for their Children, and we were proud of the relation. For the most part, we were pleased with our treatment; when otherwise, we complained, and sometimes had our grievances redressed. We conceived our charter-rights were tolerably copious, and were perfectly easy and pleased with our situation. We even gloried in the connection, and had not a wish to throw off our allegiance. In short, we deemed ourselves happy, and were ever ready to exclaim, *What hath God wrought.*

I pass on to take notice of another event, in which the Hand of God was conspicuous:—I mean, the GLORIOUS REVOLUTION. If ever there was a Revolution in the world, which claimed the patronage and agency of the Divine Being, this doth. By tracing the several circumstances relative to this great event, we shall find that God was with us of a truth. And here, I am obliged to consider Great Britain as the aggressor. The young plant in America had become a tree. The child had grown up to man's estate. Indeed it was time to emancipate ourselves; although, we being used to subjection, that step was the farthest from our thoughts; and when compelled thereto, we submitted with tears in our eyes. Britain beheld with



a jealous eye, our growing opulence, and formed a resolution to nip our rising glory in the bud. The parliament framed oppressive acts, for this purpose. They not only embarrassed our trade and commerce, but taxed us without our consent;\* and proceeded so far as to declare, that *of right they might bind us in all cases whatsoever*. Our situation at that period was truly alarming. A state of the most abject slavery, like some evil Demon, stared us in the face. What could we, the devoted sons of America, now do? Tamely to put on the shackles fabricated for us, we apprehended, would argue a meanness of soul, unworthy the offspring of Freemen—a baseness, derogatory to the dignity of human nature. We still retained an affection for Great-Britain, although strangely metamorphosed from a tender *Mother*, to a tyrannical *Step-Dame*. We therefore petitioned—we remonstrated—but obtained no relief. We then associated, and formed articles and resolutions of œconomy and non-importation; hoping these measures would open the eyes of our oppressors. But our peaceable associations were construed into factious riotous mobs; and only productive of severer menaces from Britain. When thus plunged into an abyss of perplexity, God put it into the hearts of some of the most wise and penetrating rulers in the province of Massachusetts, to write a circular letter to their American Brethren, inviting them to concur in deputing some worthy persons in each province, to meet at a given time, in the City of Philadelphia, in order to consult on measures for the benefit of the whole. And we may surely say, with respect to this motion and its amazing salutary consequences, *What hath God Wrought!*

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\* The first open and direct attempt made by Parliament, to rob America of her natural and inalienable right of internal taxation, was by the detestable Stamp-Act; fabricated for the purpose of raising a revenue. Although, as a substantial writer well observes, "The English colonies were originally established, not for the sake of revenue, but on the principles of a commercial monopoly." Ramsey's History of the Revolution, Vol. I. p. 55.

One soul pervaded the widely extended provinces. Deputations from each were sent. CONGRESS was formed! And, wonderful as it is in itself, astonishing as it appears to the whole world, this heterogeneous company became, under God, the salvation of dear America. However much divided with regard to locality, religion, personal interests, tempers and prejudices, they all united as one man, in the common cause of their country. Who, but that Being who governs the heart, could effect this? The several provinces, thus united in Congress, as the head and soul of the whole community, being still desirous of obtaining peace with Great Britain, again humbly petition the throne, and remonstrate with parliament. But the haughty monarch was deaf to our supplications, and the *Almighty* parliament spurned at our remonstrances. Instead of a redress of grievances, more roaring bulls were sent over against us; accompanied with thundering cannon to affright us into submission. Nothing short of entire, implicit obedience would suffice. Most aptly does the case of the men of Jabesh-Gilead here apply, (1 Sam. xi. 1, 2.) "Then Nahash the Ammonite came up, and encamped against Jabesh-Gilead: and all the men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, Make a covenant with us, and we will serve thee.

"And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition will I make a covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel."

It was now high time for America to arise, stand on her own feet, and make preparation for defence. By a vote of Congress, we were therefore declared, *Free and independent States.*† And after a solemn appeal to the great God, with respect to the justness of our cause and sincerity of our intentions,

† This memorable event took place July 4, 1776. May the happy day ever be celebrated with joy, gratitude and thankfulness!

"Nor let one transient cloud the bliss destroy

"Of this auspicious day, that gives Columbia joy."



tentions, we had recourse to arms.\* A step which required great intrepidity of mind, and the firmest confidence in the Lord God of Hosts. This critical juncture brought America's virtue to the test, and evinced that it was full proof. We had a powerful nation, skilled in arms and used to victory to cope with—without money, arms, or ammunition—without soldiers, and without experienced Officers. But our God, to whom we had appealed, remarkably supplied all these deficiencies. Time would fail me to particularize with regard to these things; yet with respect to a *Commander*, I must do violence to my own feelings not to observe, that the God of Armies, in infinite goodness, raised up, from among our Sons, A WASHINGTON!—WASHINGTON! a name, which no additional title or epithet can emblazon or dignify! This man, who is the boast of his country, the wonder of the world, and the darling of Providence, did God place at the head of our troops; who led them on to victory and fame. He drew his sword at an early period, and never sheathed it until the war terminated in an honorable peace.† With regard, therefore, to our *beloved* COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, all the world will join with America in saying, *What hath God wrought!*

There is another Providence which merits to be noticed here. When thus compelled to the unequal combat, and plunged into a bloody, unnatural war, God inclined the heart of the great Monarch of France, to afford us timely succours. His subjects fought by our side, and bled in our cause. By his aid in money and men, the war was brought  
to

\* The British had taught us the use of arms, by commencing hostilities at Lexington, April 19, 1775.

† Rev. Samuel Davies, (some time President of Princeton college) as though actuated by a spirit of prophecy, about the year 1754, preaching to a Regiment of Virginia Volunteers, raised and commanded by the young Col. Washington, expressed himself thus “As for that young man (Washington) his uncommon bravery, conduct, and knowledge in the art of war, at his age, is superior to what I ever read of; and he seems as if appointed by Providence to be, hereafter, the PROTECTOR AND DELIVERER OF HIS COUNTRY!”

to a more speedy and happy issue. That this puissant Prince should deign to take notice of America, in her infantile state, when under the iron rod of oppression, and declared to be in a state of actual rebellion—that he should then conclude a treaty of alliance, and trade with us, upon the most honourable and generous principles, without taking the least advantage of our weakness, but rather nobly aiming to afford us relief in our time of distress, was in very deed amazing to us, alarming to Britain, and surprizing to the world. If this event was indicative of the benevolence of that munificent King's heart, it was no less a token of favour from the great KING of *Kings*. So that here again our text will apply, *What hath God wrought!*

We are now freed from our former shackles, and enjoy peace, with all its concomitant blessings. We are acknowledged, even by that King who, by mal-practices, forfeited all just claim to our allegiance, *A free, sovereign, and independent Nation*. And unless our sins prevent, we shall certainly be the most favoured of all nations under heaven; yes we are so already. I wish to impress on the minds of my fellow-citizens a deep sense of their blessedness. We have a large extent of territory, various as to soil and climate; adapted to the production of all kinds of herbage, fruit and grain. We have raw materials in abundance, suitable for all kinds of manufactures: So that we may eat our own bread—wear our own apparel—work with our own instruments—and traffic with our own commodities, in bottoms of our own construction. In short, we may sit down under our own vine and fig-tree, having none to molest or make us afraid.

This will appear still more evident, if we advert a little to our present Government. The Federal Constitution of the United States, is the mature production of a number of the most wise and approved patriots, legally chosen as our representatives: From whom we had every thing to expect and nothing to fear. As citizens, whose interest and happiness, as well as that of their families and connections, must



must be involved with that of the Public, they could have been under no temptation to form an oppressive Constitution. Neither have they. The Constitution is open, free and generous, although energetic—calculated to render the citizens of the United States happy, as it secures unto them all their rights and privileges, upon the most permanent basis. While our rulers are of ourselves, and amenable to us, we must be safe; especially while a *Washington* presides.\* It is surely of the Lord that the same worthy character that led our troops, now guides our councils. †

The wheels of the Constitution are now in motion. Time will prove its utility. Under its benign influence, I trust, religion, agriculture, manufactures, trade and commerce, and the more liberal arts and sciences will all flourish: So that our posterity will say respecting it, *What hath God wrought!*

Let

\* America is making ample strides; and the appointment of Mr. WASHINGTON to the office of chief magistrate, was a measure most conducive to that end. Her Empire, in course of time, must be great and respectable. Her sea coasts are two thousand miles in extent, with bays and rivers, like seas, to ten times that extent—with many great harbours, and other places of security for great ships in the middle and northern provinces—with vast fisheries in those bays and rivers on the sea coast, and access to still greater on the North, to the South, and to the East of their dominions—with seas, except in one or two places, open all the year round to give continual employment to the Seamen—and with no enemies near those states to controul them.

*Federal Gazette, LONDON HEAD.*

† A gratulatory Poem made its appearance in the New Jersey Gazette April 1, 1778, signed HORTENTIVS. The author, in prophetic strains, addresses General Washington; whom he conducts victorious through the war—Leads him to his rural retreat; then draws him from his “sequester’d haunts” to his senatorial Chair.

“ Me thinks I see thee SOLON-like, design

“ The future Grandeur of confederate States

“ High tow’ring; or for legislation met,

“ Adjust in senate what thou sav’d in war.

✻ This excellent Poem is ascribed to Governor Livingston, of New Jersey.

Let none think I have forgot my office and deviated from my line of duty, by dwelling so much upon things of a secular nature : They are blessings from heaven, and call aloud for thankfulness ; to stimulate you thereto is my motive. Unthankfulness, in the enjoyment of such favors is base ingratitude. It is highly displeasing to the great donor of all Good, and hath a tendency to bring down judgments upon our land. We must nevertheless acknowledge, there is a Blessing of a superior nature, by no means to be passed over in silence ; I mean

The glorious Gospel, and that preached in its purity. This invaluable treasure our pious Fathers, who settled America, brought with them, as the most precious part of their lading. Yes ; their sole motive in transporting themselves to these then uncultivated lands, was that they might plant the Gospel here, enjoy it freely while they lived, and transmit it to posterity. Neither have they been disappointed in their Hopes ; for God, in infinite mercy, by raising up in succession, a number of able and faithful Ministers, has continued the inestimable jewel among us to the present day.

Were we to consider a preached Gospel merely as an engine of state, it would be good policy to encourage it ; for nothing so effectually reforms the morals as this. Devoid of this powerful astringent, the Body-politic becomes lax in its habit and manners, and sinks into all kinds of abominations, (Rom. i. 21 to end). On the other hand, where the Gospel is steadily and faithfully preached, it scarce fails of producing an external reformation. It illuminates the mind, restrains vice, and renders men more useful members of society. However desirable this may be, a preached gospel answers infinitely greater purposes,

It glorifies God, and saves men. These are the most sublime objects, which can demand our attention. It will be acknowledged that something may be known of God from the dim light which nature affords. "The heavens



verts declare the glory of God ; and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." (Psal. xix. 1. 2.). But the light derived from nature, in comparison with the bright effulgence of the Gospel, is but as the glimmering of a glow-worm, opposed to the sun, in its meridian splendor. Here we have the brightest display of the divine perfections; and behold as in a glass the glory of the LORD.

" Here in the Gospel's wondrous frame,

" Fresh wisdom we pursue ;

" A thousand Angels learn thy name,

" Beyond what e'er they knew."

The other valuable end of a preached Gospel is, the salvation of men. Full in point, are the words of the great Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. i. 21. "It pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe:" And, Rom. i. 16. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth." Blessed be God! thousands in America have experienced the truth of this. Therefore with respect to a preached Gospel, and its blessed effects, *It shall be said of America, What hath God wrought!*

Next to the Gospel we would notice Liberty of Conscience—a capital blessing, for which we ought ever to be thankful. This favor Americans enjoy, and I hope ever will, in its fullest extent, maugre all the *enchantments* and *divinations* used to prevent it. By demolishing this grand bulwark of religion (the natural and inalienable right of all men) thousands have been baptized in blood. It has been the sole cause of all those horrid persecutions, which have so much disgraced Christianity and set the world on fire. Through mercy, the happy revolution has freed America from all religious tests and establishments. None may say unto us, *Lo here, or lo there, you shall worship*. Neither may they tax us for the support of this, that, or the other religious society, without our consent.—Arbitrary usurpations those! which cannot fail of leaving

an indelible blot on the escutcheons of the guilty. We may now read our Bibles for ourselves, and worship our God according to the light conscience thence derives, without molestation. *Surely, according to this time it shall be said of America and her Children, What hath God wrought!*

You will bear with me, my friends, if I once more invite your attention to temporal things. Those fruitful seasons and rich harvests, wherewith the Lord, in common, has favored us, demand our grateful acknowledgements. America has never yet lacked bread. If she has not always abounded, she has never known real want. To a famine we have ever been strangers. What was predicated of Canaan, may justly be applied to our much favored Country. It is "A land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." (Deut. xi. 12). The soil is naturally fertile, and being replenished by refreshing showers, which generally fall in season, it ministers seed to the sower and bread to the eater. I hope none who hear me are so lost to a sense of divine Providence, as to burn incense to their own net and sacrifice to their own drag, by saying—"I thank my self for the plentiful productions of my fields. My own industry, prudence and care have procured me my subsistence." With equal propriety might they thank themselves for their existence. Persons of this cast would do well to consider, whence they derive their wisdom, strength and disposition to attend to business. Should the Almighty restrain the bottles of heaven from pouring out their blessings on the earth, can they command the clouds to send rain? Or should he send blasting or mildew, can they prevent their destructive influences? What hinders but that God might now, as heretofore, raise an army of locusts or caterpillars, which would destroy all before them?



them? We have seen what an insignificant insect can do in our wheat. A like enemy, with a similar commission, might have deprived us of all manner of sustenance. Instead of fulness of bread, we might have had cleanness of teeth. I conclude, therefore, that the plenty we enjoy, both as to food and raiment, cometh down from the Father of mercies; and that we have reason to say in this case also, *What hath God wrought!*

It is a truth acknowledged on all hands, that health is the prime of all temporal blessings. And hath not an indulgent Providence favoured America with a rich plenitude of this inestimable jewel? Our rapid population, florid countenances, and robust constitutions, most clearly evince this. As yet we are strangers to those epidemical or pestilential diseases, which, in various parts of the world, have come down like tornadoes, and deluged thousands in swift destruction. Why have we escaped? Are we better than others? No. In no wise. We are a sinful people. Does the air which is wafted over the Atlantic, and fans our coasts, or the blasts from the frigid zone, which sweep the lakes and scale the mountains, purge away all noxious vapours from our land? This may be doubted. But suppose this to be the case, to whom are we indebted for this salubrious medicine? Surely to Him "Who hath gathered the wind in his fist;" (Prov. xxx. 4.) and manages the elements at pleasure. To him it is owing that our air is not over-charged with epidemic particles. That it is not wholly clear is evident, from that disorder which has so recently and generally visited the inhabitants of the United States, called by some, *The Influenza*. That this complaint proceeded from the temperature of the air is not doubted. If therefore the air had been sufficiently charged with those noxious particles, every individual would have been numbered with the dead—As it was, few died—In this unthankful neighbourhood, not one.

To what shall we attribute these benign interventions, and

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that comfortable state of health generally enjoyed by Americans? Not, I hope, to mere chance. May America's favoured children rather join in ascribing all the honor to the great Governor of the Universe, devoutly exclaiming, *What hath God wrought!*

Here we might all unite in chorus, saying *What hath not God wrought!* And I might proceed in enumerating instances of Divine Philanthropy to the citizens of these United States. But time fails me. I shall therefore sum up the whole in a few words. *Surely there is no enchantment against America, neither is there any divination against her children.\**

Shielded

\* It would seem nevertheless, from the following select, enumerated facts, that the British meant to establish an unrighteous domination over America, chiefly by the influence of Enchantment or Divination.

1. Their primary object was to establish a permanent American Revenue, by money drawn out of our pockets, without our consent.
2. They shut up the Port of Boston, and prohibited the New Englanders the liberty of fishing on their Banks, in hopes of starving them, and terrifying the other Provinces, into a surrender of their just Rights.
3. They sent over a powerful Army in the time of peace, to cram their unjust and oppressive Acts down our Throats.
4. By a Declaratory Act, they claimed a Right to bind Americans in all cases whatsoever.
5. They wantonly commenced Hostilities against us at Lexington.
6. They excluded the Americans from the Rights of Citizens, by declaring them to be from under the royal protection.
7. After having swept all the Augean-Stables in England, Scotland, and Ireland for troops, they hired foreign Mercenaries, to participate in the Revenues of Plunder and Blood.
8. With horrid Ferocity, they burnt our towns, country houses and barns. But above all, they wreaked their vengeance against Houses devoted to the Worship of the God of Heaven. Many of these they wantonly consumed by fire.—Some they turned into riding schools—some into Hospitals—some into forage Houses, and some, probably, into Brothels.
9. They compell'd captured Seamen, to enlist in their service, and to fight against their country, their friends and dearest connections.
10. They instigated the savage Indians, to scalp and butcher the tender Infant—the innocent Virgin—the grave Matron—the Man of gray hairs, and in short, persons of every description.



Shielded by Omnipotence, and replenished by the divine Munificence, America is safe, and must be happy while the Lord her God continues to work for her.

And are these things so? Is America, though like Jacob, the youngest, yet the most favoured Child of an indulgent Providence? "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness," (2 Pet. iii. 11.). I have endeavoured, according to my small abilities, to represent the *Blessedness* of America, and shall now, by way of

11. They embodied, armed and trained our Domestics for the Purpose of robbing us, and cutting our Throats.

12. They starved, and in effect butchered, thousands in Provosts and in prison-Ships.

13. To crown the whole, and to show, that they were Adepts in the black-art of Divination,—after we had declared ourselves a free and independent Nation—made a solemn appeal to Heaven—pledged ourselves to each other, to maintain our Rights, at the Hazard of Life and Property, and formed an Alliance with France—Britain, labouring under a full conviction, that they would never be able to subjugate America by Arms, sent out a number of Commissioners to treat with us on terms of Accommodation. And so copious was their Commission, that they offered the King's Pardon, with an assurance of royal favor to repenting, returning American-rebels, of almost every Description. One of them proceeded still farther. George Johnstone Esqr. made Trial of the Art of Bribery. It should seem, by his Letter to Robert Morris, Esqr. that He had glanced his Basiliskin Eye upon our great General Washington, and upon his Excellency Henry Laurens, Esqr. then President of Congress. But upon the Virtue of Joseph Reed Esqr. he made a formal Attack, both by Letter and the enchanting Eloquence of a fine Lady: Who gave Him to understand, that "He might have L. 10,000-sterling, and any Office in the Colonies in his Majesty's Gift," provided he would use "his Interest to promote the object of their Commission." To which Mr. Reed, like a true American Patriot, replied, in the Laconic Style, "I am not worth purchasing; but such as I am, the King of Great Britain is not rich enough to do it."

Thus it appears, that none of these 13 efforts of British Divination, nor even the combined force of them all, could enchant Americans into a servile submission to an abject state of slavery. So far from it, that they terminated in the freedom, sovereignty and glorious Independence of the 13 United American States.

of improvement, attempt to point out the *duty* of her Children.

But, methinks, you here anticipate all I have to offer on this head. For, upon a review of what has been delivered relative to your happiness as Americans, is not each one of you ready to cry out, What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits? This, we would charitably hope, is the general language of all present; although, as to the expressions of it, differently modified. All, therefore, I have to do, is to coincide with your various feelings, in point of *duty*.

Some of you probably may be of opinion that, "Seeing we are thus highly favored, we ought surely to be *content* and *satisfied* with our lot." True, my friends. We should be a base, ungrateful people if we were not. No people upon earth can have more reason to be satisfied with their situation than we have. The children of Israel, favoured as they were in the land of Canaan had not. If they had their corn, wheat and barley, so have we. If they had their milk and honey, so have we. If they were happy under their theocratic government, we are no less so, under the care and patronage of Almighty God. If they could make their boast of being under the administration of the Law, we may rather glory in being under the dispensation of the Gospel; which is far better. So that our situation, upon the whole, is more eligible than that of the tribes of Israel was. Let us not murmur then as those people did. May we rather be content with such things as we have; especially, seeing we are blest with Naphtali's rich portion, "Satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the *Lord*." (Deut. xxxiii. 23.)

Others are saying, "We ought not only to be content, but *thankful* also." With this hint I also agree. The advice of an inspired Apostle stands thus, "In every thing give thanks." I suppose his meaning to be, that *for* every thing we enjoy, we should be thankful to God. If so, Americans have blessings enough to engross their whole  
time



time in thanksgiving. If we have the least gratitude, we cannot be silent, but must be incessantly offering thanks and praise to God, for the many benefits he so liberally bestows upon us. One thing in particular, I wish all my Fellow-Citizens to be thankful for; i. e. *Jesus Christ*, through whom alone Salvation is to be obtained. Here let us join issue with the Apostle in devoutly saying, "Thanks be unto God, for this unspeakable Gift."

"And ought we not to be *humble* to?" some meek souls are ready to reply. Undoubtedly we ought. Humility is a Virtue of the first magnitude, and of the utmost importance to such sinful creatures as we are. The Apostle advises us to put it on, and wear it as a garment. "Be cloathed with Humility." No habit can be more pleasing to the Divine Being. The reverse is his abhorrence. God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. We have much reason to lie low in the dust before God, on account of the Corruptions of our nature, and the sinfulness of our lives; and, as Americans, on account of ingratitude for the many mercies received. May we ever bear on our minds that axiom of the wise man, "Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud." (Prov. xvi. 19.)

Imprest with a spirit of true patriotism, as I know my attentive and affectionate audience to be, methinks I hear some, or all of them saying, "Seeing we are favoured with such an excellent Federal-Constitution, which we apprehend to be the best form of government in the world; and also such a select Body of worthy rulers, with our beloved Washington at their Head, ought we not to demean ourselves as good subjects by a *peaceable submission and cheerful obedience*?" Certainly, we ought. Magistracy is God's ordinance. "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God." The grand design of this institution is to suppress vice and encourage virtue. The magistrate, "Is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil." I conclude therefore

fore that while we are under the controul of good and wholesome, i. e. just and equal laws, righteously executed, "We must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." Nevertheless, should it so happen, that a corrupt legislature should fabricate unjust and oppressive laws, repugnant to our civil and religious rights, obedience to the magistrate, in that case, would be to rebel against God, and betray our trust as citizens. A polite preacher (not over friendly to the American Revolution) hath well expressed himself, in the following words: "The Apostle enjoins us to submit 'to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake'. But surely a submission to the unrighteous ordinances of unrighteous men, cannot be for the Lord's sake." If this reasoning be just, opposition in such a case must be lawful. And upon no other principle can the American Revolution be justified.

Under the influence of the social virtues, some often are ready to urge, "We think it highly expedient, that Americans, in order to render themselves truly happy, should retain an affectionate regard for each other, and *live together in love*." I think as you do. Americans ought to be "A band of brothers." If they mean to be really happy, "Love without dissimulation" should pervade every social interview. Of what avail will it be to swim in affluence—enjoy health—have peace from abroad—wholesome laws and good rulers at home, and yet live in malice and envy, biting and devouring one another? Such wild gourds would be death in the pot, and effectually poison all the sweets of society. On the other hand, if Love be the Bond of our union, the cement of our *social compact*, we shall be more happy in ourselves, and more formidable to our neighbours. In a word, if we live in love, the God of love and peace will be with us.

But others speak, and I wish to attend to what all have to offer on a matter so interesting to my country. "Blest as we are with so many advantages, it surely behoves us to lead *active, useful lives*." I am glad to hear you say so. Usefulness



ness should be every one's aim. Slothful, inactive persons are a dead weight on society. Such drones merit to be stung out of the hive of the Commonwealth. None are so insignificant, if possessed of common abilities, but they might be some way useful in life. We are not all to move in the same line of business. All are not qualified to be Ministers of the Gospel—Presidents of Congress—Governors of States—Counsellors at the Bar, or Practitioners of Physic; but all are qualified for some kind of business, whereby they may be serviceable to the community. Each one ought to find out what that business is, and diligently attend to it. Thus arranged, America would form a mighty army of useful individuals.

“ Yes, reply some generous souls, we ought to be diligent in business, not only that we may supply our own and families wants; but also that we may have some thing to *contribute towards the exigences both of church and state.*” This, Sirs, is noble. I could wish all men were like minded. But there are too many niggardly beings in the world, (may such characters never disgrace America) who begrudge themselves the comforts, and even the necessities of life. The poor, for ought they care, may perish. And the Gospel, in their estimation, is not worth a *groat* a year. They groan at paying their taxes, and often defraud their labourers. If such creatures are not lost to all sense of feeling, I would advise them to read, and consider Isa. xxxii. 8. “ The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.”

But, what pleasing sound is that I hear? All in chorus join, exclaiming, “ Piety towards God is the *One thing needful* ;” therefore a people so highly favoured of the Lord, ought surely to be *religious.*” I thank you, my brethren! Oh! How sweetly you allure me into my native element! You have spoken the genuine sentiments of my soul, and you may be sure they cannot fail of my hearty concurrence. RELIGION! That sacred—that venerable name! *Religion*, demands our utmost attention. It should be the alpha and omega—the first and the last in our esteem. Piety towards God should pervade all our thoughts, words, and actions.

We

We have a good and merciful God, in whose hand our breath is. In Him we live, move and have our being, and from Him all our blessings flow. Considered as rational creatures, God has done great things for us. But, as Americans, what has He not done? He has given us a fertile, pleasant land. We have a goodly heritage.† “Our dwelling is the fatness of the earth, and of the dew from heaven (Gen. xxvii. 39.).” Our God crowneth the year with his goodness, and his paths drop fatness.” Our pastures are covered with cattle, and there is no lack of herds in the stalls. Our ears are saluted with the lowing of oxen and the bleating of sheep. Our tables are spread with a rich variety of good things. And our cloathing is (as it ought to be) of our own wool and flax, manufactured by our own hands. We are a free and independent people—blest with a good government—wholesome laws, and wise rulers. And, to crown the whole, the silver trumpet of the Gospel sounds, from one end of our land to the other, proclaiming Liberty to the inhabitants. Christ, the Prince of peace is come, in his chariot of salvation, to convey believing Souls to the inner chamber of the *universal King*! We are lost in the recital!----O! *What hath God wrought!*

Thus kind, thus gracious, thus benevolent, and thus bountiful, hath the great JEHOVAH been to America! May all her children devoutly exclaim, “Who would not fear thee, O KING OF NATIONS! My earnest prayer is, that we may “Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in *truth* with *all our heart*! seriously considering what GREAT THINGS He hath done for Us.” Then our text will apply; with which I shall conclude.

*Surely there is no incantment against AMERICA, neither is there any divination against her children; according to this time it shall be said of America and her citizens, WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!*

† Those who would wish to know the true state and real worth of our happy land, may be gratified by reading Morse's American Geography. A book which merits a place on every man's shelf.

THE END.



